

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 MMO-01 INR-07 PER-01 SS-15

SP-02 IGA-02 DODE-00 /053 W
----- 002889

R 041130Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1441

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 2715

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MILI, TO, DM, IV, ML, NG, UV

SUBJECT: RECLAMA OF DOD PLAN TO REDUCE SIZE ABIDJAN

ATTACHE OFFICE

1. EMBASSY LOME HAS LEARNED THAT DOD PLANS TO ELIMINATE ONE OF TWO SLOTS IN EMBASSY ABIDJAN ATTACHE OFFICE. BILLET PRESENTLY HELD BY FULL COLONEL. REMAINING OFFICER WOULD BE LT. COLONEL GRADE. SINCE THIS OFFICE PROVIDES ATTACHE SERVICES TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES, INCLUDING TOGO, EMBASSY LOME SURPRISED IT NOT CONSULTED RE PROPOSED CHANGE AT THIS DYNAMIC PERIOD IN WEST AFRICAN POLITICAL LIFE.

2. OF FIVE ENTENTE COUNTRIES, FOUR HAVE MILITARY REGIMES. MOREOVER, BENIN MAY BECOME INCREASINGLY PERNICIOUS PROBLEM. MEANWHILE, POSSIBILITY OF GROWING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN MALI REPORTEDLY TROUBLING UPPER VOLTA AND NIGER, AS WELL AS TOGO.

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3. IN THIS CONNECTION, CLAUDE CHEYSSON, EEC COMMISSIONER

FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION ON AFRICA, CARIBBEAN AND
PACIFIC AFFAIRS, AND THE NEGOTIATOR OF THE ACP/EEC
LOME CONVENTION, HAS INFORMED SEVERAL LOCAL AMBASSADORS THAT
DURING HIS CALL ON PRESIDENT EYADEMA ON DECEMBER 1
EYADEMA SAID HE "EXTREMELY WORRIED" ABOUT REPORTS SOVIET
ARMS SHIPMENTS ARRIVING BENIN. CHEYSSON ASKED LOCAL
FRENCH AMBASSADOR WHETHER REPORTS WERE TRUE. LATTER DID
NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY, ACCORDING TO EMBASSY SOURCE, BUT
LEFT IMPLICATION REPORT MIGHT BE TRUE. (WE RELIABLY
INFORMED SOVIET SMALL ARMS AND COMMO EQUIPMENT BEING
DELIVERED TO BENIN.)

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT THIS NO
TIME TO REDUCE OUR CAPABILITY TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON
IN SEVERAL MILITARY-BASED GOVERNMENTS THIS AREA.
REQUEST DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROPOSED REDUCTION DOD STAFF
ABIDJAN AND INFORM EMBASSY RESULTS THIS ANALYSIS. THIS
REVIEW SHOULD TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT ABIDJAN ATTACHE
OFFICE WILL HAVE AT LEAST COLLATERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR
OVERSEEING IMMINENT MILITARY SALES PROGRAM FOR UPPER VOLTA.
PALMER

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